

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Sartorius North America Inc

Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center - Colorado

Sartorius Successfully Weighs In On Lean Manufacturing

Client Profile:

Sartorius North America Inc., located in Arvada, Colorado, manufactures weighing technologies, electrochemistry meters and moisture analyzers for lab and process facilities. Sartorius products are primarily used in the pharmaceutical, food and water and waste water industries. The company currently employs 85 people.

Situation:

Doug Biette, Sartorius vice president of operations, leads Sartorius' Lean Manufacturing efforts. While Sartorius had successfully implemented various Lean principles, they needed some assistance training their employees. Sartorius contacted the Mid-America Manufacturing Technology Center (MAMTC), a NIST MEP affiliate, for help.

Solution:

MAMTC worked with Sartorius to train employees in one of its five work cells, the Economy Balance Line, a high volume, competitive product line. MAMTC presented a general Lean overview course for the project team to familiarize them with all of the basic principles of Lean Manufacturing. MAMTC then led them through a Value Stream Mapping (VSM) event. During a VSM event, a current state map and a future state map of the production process are developed. The maps are then compared to uncover any non-value-added steps. The maps reveal how 'flow' can be improved and a plan is developed, including the steps, deadlines and personnel needed to achieve the improvements.

Based upon the results of the VSM, Sartorius identified two priority projects key to attaining the streamlined final or future state workplace organization and standardizing work practices. To organize the workplace, MAMTC conducted 5S training for the entire work cell. The 5S philosophy focuses on simplifying the work environment, reducing waste, and improving quality and safety. It consists mainly of sorting, storing, shining, standardizing and sustaining to create a streamlined work environment. Within four months, the entire cell had completed the 5S implementation. To standardize work practices, two priority documents were developed: a sequence of events sheet and a method sheet. The sequence of events sheet outlined the proper sequence of the tasks, while the method sheet graphically illustrated tasks to supplement the work cell training program.

After completing the two projects, Biette anticipates cost savings of \$84,000 and labor savings of \$30,000 due to better resource utilization. Sartorius also increased its efficiency and on time delivery of orders. In addition, employee morale was improved as people became more involved in the process. Sartorius has begun to implementing 5S to its remaining four work cells and sets weekly benchmarking goals to sustain its efforts.

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Results:

- * Increased efficiency.
- * Produced a cost savings of \$84,000.
- * Saved \$30,000 in labor costs.
- * Improved morale.
- * Increased on time delivery.

Testimonial:

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